

REMARKS

Initially, applicant would like to thank the Examiner for communicating with applicant's undersigned representative on and about 17 February 2004 regarding the claimed invention. During such communication, the Examiner indicated that amendments to independent claims 1 and 8 as presented above may be appropriate for distinguishing the invention over the art of record.

Upon entry of the present amendment, the claims in the application are claims 1- 6, 8-10, 12 and 14 -17, of which claims 1 and 8 are independent.

Claims 1 and 8 are amended to incorporate limitations previously presented in dependent claims 7, 11 and 13 (now cancelled) relating to the formation of the conductive clamp as a unitary, flexible member formed of electrically conductive resin.

Applicant respectfully submits that: the above amendments are fully supported by the original disclosure, including the drawings and claims, no new matter is introduced by the above amendments, the amendments do not raise any new issues for consideration by the Examiner because they simply incorporate features of dependent claims into the independent claims.

Further, applicant respectfully submits that the above amendments are believed to place the application in condition for allowance based on the Examiner's recent indication.

The application is now believed to be in condition for allowance, and a notice to this effect is earnestly solicited.

If the Examiner is not fully convinced of all of the claims now in the application, applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner telephonically contact applicant's undersigned representative to expeditiously resolve prosecution of the application.

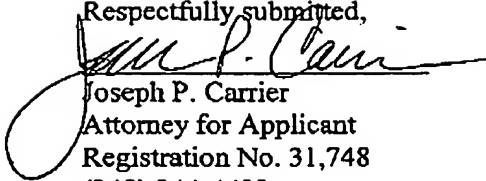
Entry of the present Amendment is respectfully requested under 37 CFR 1.116 on the grounds that: the Amendment does not raise any new issues for consideration by the Examiner; the Amendment reduces the number of issues on appeal, if necessary; and moreover, the Amendment is believed to place the application in condition for allowance.

A Petition for Two-Month Extension is being filed concurrently herewith.

Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

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Respectfully submitted,


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CERTIFICATE OF TRANSMISSION

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being sent via facsimile transmission to the US Patent & Trademark Office, Art Unit 3618, February 25, 2004.

Dated: February 25, 2004
JPC/ms

